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ABSTRACT

Libraries have long functioned as institutions which exerted wide-ranging cultural-social activity as determined by the economic and cultural needs of society. Librarianship as an educational factor has become increasingly important during the past half century with respect to its quantitative growth and its quality world-wide. Although the school system will always occupy the primary role in erudition and education, knowledge and cognition must also be acquired through the individual efforts of the pupil or student. Libraries are the greatest and most approachable source for acquiring, creating and conserving information but many public libraries have been lax in developing services adequate for the requirements of society. The furthering of the effectiveness and the educational and eruditional endeavors of libraries and augmentation of their social importance require the creation of a specific pedalogical discipline. In Slovakia, the term "biblio-paedogogics" covers that discipline whose sphere covers scientific research and theoretical interest beyond that of work with the reader in the library, handling books and the like. Its development is one of the principal conditions for development of the public library as an educational factor. (AB)

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THE LIBRARY AS FACTOR IN ERUDITION

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The library as factor in erudition

Libraries are among the most ancient institutions. Their task is to inform and to exert a wide ranging cultural-social activity. Their coming into being, their institutional and functional development were determined by the economic and cultural needs of society. The ever increasing trend of these needs and the paralelly occurring saturation with material and spiritual values were exerting their influence not only on the internal organisatory build-up and structure of the libraries but also on their relationship to the events going on in society and on the relationship of these events to the libraries. It was particularly the qualitative level of the relations of society to the libraries that influenced their development and thus also the level of their engagement in the development of social processes.

The libraries are rightly said to be centres of erudition where the printed word is gathered, expertly processed, conserved and made approachable to interested people. The libraries always were and remained to be basical scientific-informative centres even if in our time there are besides them closely specialized modern and preferred centres of information equiped with the most modern technique which, however, increasingly penetrates into the informative centres of the classical type - into all libraries.

Informative activity always constituted the basical component of library activity though in many instances a component increasingly lagging behind the needs of scientific and technical research. In this lagging behind are to be sought the roots of causes

for which in this period of "information explosion" we can frequently see that the historical organic continuity of the information system is negated. This is,of course, an unjustified view even if reference is made to the multi-functionality of the libraries they actually had and still have. Among the functions of libraries is their cultural-eruditional function also in the informative sense of the word.

The genesis of the eruditional and educational function of libraries cannot be sought for solely in the 18th century, in the "century of enlightenment and reason"when the force and the possibilities of education were overrated and when education – unjustly – was elevated into the rank of a decisive factor in the elimination of social deficiencies and differences. No doubt, it was a progressive step forward that the tremendous social force of erudition and education had been cognized and emphasized, on the other hand,however,it was a mistake not to see at the same time also the evident dependence of education on the real economic possibilities of society. Besides that, the ideological tendencies of the 18th century,marked by rationalism, markedly influenced and accelerated also the development of the educational function of the libraries. Beginning with that period the libraries were increasingly integrating themselves into the processes of pedagogics, thus increasingly participating in the erudition and education of wider layers of society. And beginning with this period libraries are considered to be factors of erudition and education in society. Subsequently their educational and eruditional function has been growing parallelly with the growth of the needs in economic and cultural life and of the needs of democratization of social life whose development was particularly intensified by the revolutionary tendencies and processes in the 19th century and early in the 20th

century,mainly by the Great Socialistic October Revolution. It was V.I.Lenin who played an important role in laying down the ideological foundations of socialistic librarianship as a factor in education; actually no other stateman did so much in the care for libraries. The theoretical conclusions of Lenin concerning librarianship as educational factor are of basical importance.

In the course of the past half century the importance of librarianship as an educational factor was becoming increasingly evident both with respect to its quantitative growth and to its quality all over the world. Life of the libraries was gaining in dynamism and the work of the librarian became ever more exigent both with respect to them expert caracter and the quality of his work. The educational and eruditional function of libraries was given increased care; nevertheless,it must be admitted that the care given to them has not been adequate to social necessities. The development of the eruditional and educational function of libraries was not sufficiently intensive; libraries were not requested to intensively apply the existing paedagogical cognitions, neither were they emphatically requested to deal scientifically with paedagogical and psychological problems occurring in library work nor were systematic endeavours undertaken to solve these problems on a scientific level. Of course by stating this we don't want to state that there were not any countries where library paedagogics or even library psychology did not obtain due care. For instance,in the Soviet Union remarkable results have been achieved in work with the reader, gradually acting positively on the development of the educational activity of libraries particularly in the countries of eastern and central Europe,and after the victory over fascism to a larger extent not only in these countries. The development of paedagogical thinking in librarianship in the Soviet Union was positively acted upon by the fact that the branch of librarian-

ship became as a scientific discipline integrated into the paedagogical system of sciences, i.e. into the nomenclature of scientific disciplines. This fact had an extraordinary range and importance with respect to the development of theoretical thinking in the field of librarianship in other countries as well.

In the contemporary libraries as multi-functional cultural institutions there are two reciprocally linked components of their activity oscillating and dominating. They were developing parallel with each other,and it is difficult or even impossible to separate one of the other. What we have in mind are the components of <u>information</u> and <u>education</u>. This can be markedly observed just in our days when the principal concern of the libraries is not so much the most general foundation of erudition; this is first of all concern of the schools. What the libraries are mainly concerned with is the complementation of those qualities of human personality which on the contemporary level of development of the social progress are timely in the respective country, which are necessary and unavoidable not only from the viewpoint of the entire society but also from the viewpoint of the human individual who needs to be purposefully integrated into the life of society. Particularly characteristical for our present time is the scientific-technical and cultural revolutionary process. This progress requires human consciousness to be penetrated by older but mainly newer and quite recent cognitions and informations,experiences and abilities from all domaines of human activity. There are ever augmenting exigences with respect to the moral quality of workers in all professions and categories, to their faculties not only as far as their practical knowledge is concerned; further,to their social activity and engagement,their creative partipation in the processes of work and in social processes. Our present time is increasingly exigent with respect to the creation and utili-

sation of scientific and other cognitions. The development in technique, rationalisation in production and work of all kinds call for a revision of the workers' qualification. There is quite a number of other, not at all fictive arguments prompting us to form totally new aspects at the goals,contents,tasks,methods, forms and means of erudition and education; they compell us to develop ideas on the existing systems of education of young and adult people,to adapt these systems to the new,exigent needs of our present time and to create also models of new and better systems with factors enabling all the interested persons to obtain an improved satisfaction of their needs and requirements. Anyway, not one of the modern educational systems can do without a library in its focal point.

It goes without saying that it is the system of schools that will occupy primary position in erudition and education. However,it is not accidental that in this system,too, in its framework gradually there has been a formation of extraordinary, up to now unknown types of adult education /postgradual,superstructural,attestational and others/ and that in many countries an extramural system of education and erudition with various additional subsystems has come inte being besides the regular school system. In any case,however,libraries must be taken into account, their place being in the centre and not on the periphery. Libraries as factors of erudition and education must be taken into account because of their dynamism and their acting on a scientific level. This requirements results from the very simple facts linked with the modernization and rationalization of erudition and education of children,young people and adults. It results particularly from the cognition that at present no school, no institution of erudition is allowed to build its work

solely on the memory system of acquiring knowledge and cognition. Neither is the school or educational institution allowed to suppose that its pupils or students would acquire knowledge and cognition solely by the efforts made by the respective school or institution, without efforts individually exterted by the pupil or student. There is no doubt about the fact that the acquisition of a quantity of cognitions and particularly a deeper penetration in the respective subject requires an intensive individual study, linking up with a previous collective erudition. This is not something new and unknown in paedegogical theory and practice; however, this is a cognition not yet sufficiently deeply penetrated into the consciousness of the paedagogues. And there is still an insufficient comprehension of the fact that in connexion with the scientific-technical revolution the paedagogical processes must be unavoidably, purposefully and rather rationally linked with self-erudition and self-education. Furthermore, there is no full realization of the today directly obvious requirement that institutional erudition of any kind is logically bound to be continued by an intensive and permanent self-erudition which ensues an augmented importance of the book in the paedagogical processes. The goal particularly of the school-paedagogical processes of our present time is not only to teach and to instill a lot of knowledge to their pupils or students but – and this they want to do to an even greater extent – to instruct them already during their study at school <u>how to learn by themselves</u> in order to be able to acquire by their own force the scientific, political, specifically expert and other cognitions, to deepen their knowledge by their own force, to comprehend their cognitions in wider causal relationships and to have the ability of applying them in practice. Already on the base of this certainly not very deeply penetrating

look at the problem of educatioh we can state that there is in our present time an increasing importance of libraries as factors in education. Their importance is augmenting and will augment in the future also because libraries actually were and are the most expanded and the most approachable public centres of erudition and information endowed with optimal possibilities of acquiring, creating and conserving informations and mediating cognitions.

The truth must be admitted that in many public libraries their component of information and eruditon did not yet attain the level of social needs; from the expert point of view there has not been a development adequate to the requirements of society. The paedagogical and didactical aspects of them and around them were and still are examined to an only relatively low measure though in almost every country there is evident knowledge of the effective ways and means how to make approachable the scientific cognitions and informations on them,and how to adopt them individually in a purposeful way. Let us suppose that scientific workers have this ability. But the producers of material values are less able of procuring and individually adopt them since they were not and neither are they at present sufficiently prepared by the school or by some institution outside the school, to be able to do a work of this kind. The obsolete idea according to which scientific informations are to serve only creative workers in science and technique has not been overcome up to the present. Actually,however, in our present time every working person is bound to represent a deeply thinking and creative type of worker possessing qualities adequate to the productive process, social life and to an all-sided, yes,also political and other engagement of man. Despite the fact that in the present state of production science constitutes a marked motive power,and that owing to the progress made in science and technique man was relieved of doing the heaviest work, he has not

been relieved of his position as the principal and decisive factor in the process of production. Man has been enabled to interfere rather by his cleverness and erudition, i.e. in an increased creative way with the processes of production and with the social processes. These and other facts compell us to re-examine, to improve, to make more precise or to alter the goals of education and the tasks resulting from it; we have to procede in the same way with regard to the contents, methods and forms of educational and eruditional work, and, decidedly, we are bound to give the object and subject in education a well-balanced position and task particularly as far as education at school is concerned. As to the erudition and education of adults, emphasis should be laid upon the individual approach; collective erudition should have a more or less didactico-methodical, consultative and informative character. These are the tendencies in development; actually, they are not only tendencies by now. It appears from them unambiguously that public libraries are and will be the main centres in the organisatory foundation of an all-sided extra-scholar erudition and education. Of course, their activity must always be seen in a coordinated bond with the activity of other factors and institutions of erudition. Any library would be wrong by charging itself with tasks which are in contradiction to its immediate mission consisting in an organized collection of sources of cognition and erudition. A library must in all cases remain a library; it is not to be combined with activities distant of its mission.

We cannot negatively valuate the hitherto undertaken experiments and endeavours of many public libraries all over the world which are not any more standing on the periphery of their respective education and educational systems and which owing to their importance deliberately steer towards the centre of these systems. They are gradually gaining acknowledgement also from the side of

paedagogical experts who earlier were not very eager to get out from the framework of their expert specialization ,neither did they see and estimate the necessity and the importance of a wider inter-disciplinary cooperation even with expert librarians theoretically and practically oriented towards paedagogical problems of the library. However,one is bound to objectively state that in the not distant past paedagogical problems of the library did not stand in the fore-ground of attention either of experts in librarianship or in informatics. True,there were many among them trying to cooperate with young and adult readers, and they were interested in the paedagogical and psychological aspects of this work,however not on a wider base of scientific research. And thus,papers,studies and contributions dealing with paedagogical themes and problems of librarianship had and still have a predominantly practical and practicistical character. Of course, in view of the ever expanding educational function of the library and of the increasing requirements requested from the library as a factor in education this state of things cannot give satisfaction. In fact,it does not comply with the needs and requirements of society.

The furthering of the effectiveness of the educational and eruditional endeavours of libraries and thus also the augmentation of their social importance requires the creation and even an international constitution of a specific paedagogical discipline; in our country,Slovakia, the name <u>biblio-paedagogics</u> gains ground when speaking of this new discipline, in our view a suitable and acceptable denomination also in international relation.By this denomination is meant a specific scientific discipline whose sphere of scientific, research and theoretical interests cannot be confined solely within the limits of theoretical interest in the work with the reader in the library,work with the book,care of reciprocal relations between the reader and the book,and the like . Actually,bibliopaedagogics

includes a whole complex of educational problems of the public libraries also with respect to the reciprocal relationship of the libraries to other educational and eruditional institutions, and – last but not least – it includes their relationship to information activity, to the users of scientific informations. Of course, it includes also the preparation of these informations and a timely,systematic,scientifically founded solicitude for them in the educational systems. Naturally,this preparatory work and care cannot be conceived without paedagogically instructed workers in librarianship and informatics. It appears then that bibliopaedagogics embraces a relatively very wide circle of specific scientific interests. Since bibliopaedagogics is a special paedagogics, it utalizes mainly paedagogical but also other suitable methods of scientific work of interdisciplinary character. By stating all this we want to emphasize that the hitherto gained bibliopaedagogical cognitions doubtlessly require to be synthetized and further bibliopaedagogical research is to be developed on a broad basis.

The development of bibliopaedagogics is one of the principal conditions for an intensive development of the public library as an educational factor.An important step forward could be made by establishing a system of recording /filing/ of bibliopaedagogical literature /publications in book-form,studies and important contributions/ existing in all countries with a subsequent publication and propagation of their annotated lists. There is no doubt that this would be a good service done to the development of bibliopaedagogics.In fact,the development of bibliopaedagogics is one of the basical prerequisites for a further augmentation of the effectiveness of the educational and eruditional work of public libraries and thus also of their position in the life of society.